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Congress and the CIA

As a former director of the organization, Allen Dulles writes with authority in his article declaring that there should be no further congressional curbs on the United States Central Intelligence Agency. This super-secret enterprise, of course, embraces some of our Government's most delicate and most dangerous operations, and it therefore bears vitally on the security of the Nation. That is why Mr. Dulles argues that it must be exempted from controls normally exercised by either the House or the Senate, or both working together in the form of a joint committee. As he has put it, "we are faced by an antagonist [the Kremlin] that has raised the art of espionage to an unprecedented height," and in such circumstances there is need to put a bridle on the American inclination "to talk too much about matters that should be classified."

These matters, according to Mr. Dulles, most certainly include the CIA's operations, which could be greatly hampered—and perhaps washed out altogether—if subjected to constant congressional gossip, scrutiny and badgering of a sort that could let out all the secrets. This strikes us as a solid point, but Democratic Senator Morse of Oregon has firm views to the contrary. He believes that the CIA exercises police-state powers that should be taken away from it forthwith, and he intends to speak at length on the issue in the next week or so. The event will be awaited with interest, especially in view of the Senator's formidable capacity to speak at length. Meanwhile, it must be hoped that there will be no politicking in this exceedingly sensitive area.